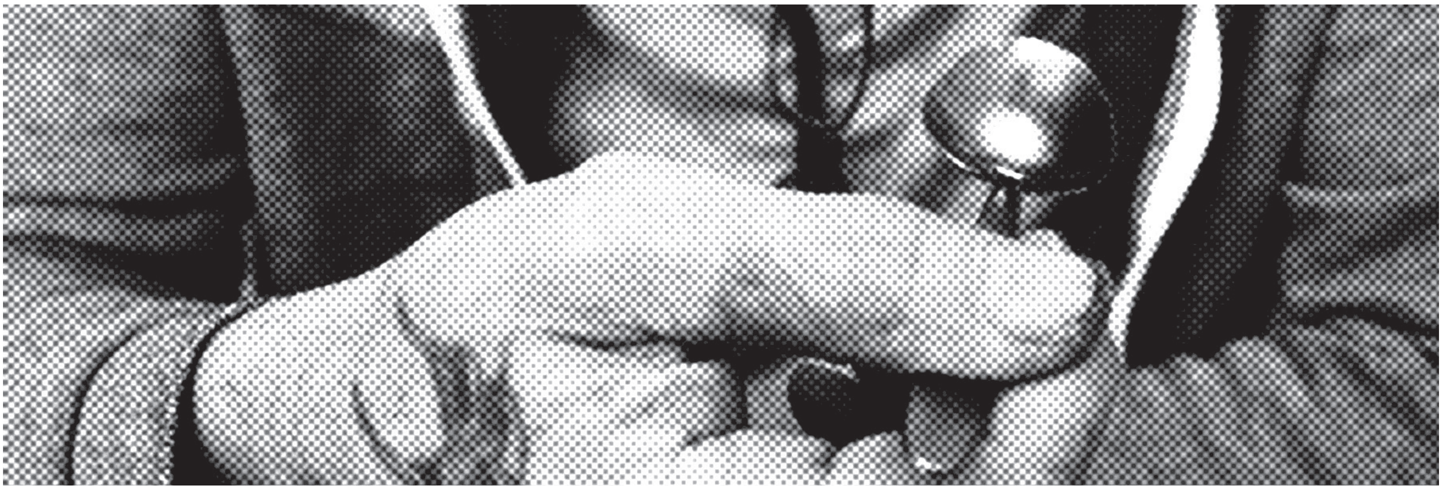




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AVALANCHE

Anarchist correspondence



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Storming Heaven (Seattle)
http://stormingheaven.noblogs.org

PugetSoundAnarchists (Pacific Northwest)
http://www.pugetsoundanarchists.org/

Websites

Contrainfo
http://contrainfo.espiv.net

Act for freedom now
http://actforfree.nostate.net

Tabula Rasa
http://www.atabularasa.org

Voz como arma
http://vozcomoarma.noblogs.org

Brèves du désordre
http://cettesemaine.free.fr/spip

Non Fides
http://www.non-fides.fr

Editorial

Almost without a whimper, the Western powers went to war in Syria and Iraq (for the latter the war effort changes again of nature). The democratic opposition barely organized a sterile demonstration. The ease with which the war is declared, pushes us towards the conclusion that the Western powers have been involved in a permanent war for quite a while now.

Against the internal enemy the arsenal of the repression machine grows. From “administrative” harassment trying to paralyze a dynamic of struggle to the media spectacle of the “terrorist threat” concretely coming down to years of prison for comrades. And if in the course of execution of their repressive tasks the agents of order destroy lives, this is voluntary or involuntary “collateral damage”. The repressive efforts are certainly not only ‘reserved’ for anarchists. The legitimacy of democracy is increasingly expressed in the extent to which democracy can enforce its rules and laws. The diversification of the repressive arsenal is one side of it. In addition, the abiding discourse judges anyone who does not comply with the rules of power an enemy of democratic values and of the obedient citizens. Democracy presents itself as protector of the good citizens against the disruptive enemy. And anarchists certainly are disruptive, but that does not mean the role of the enemy that democracy has created suits us fine. It would be a mistake to fight according to the rules of democracy which only prepare the battleground for repression or recuperation.

Against the external enemy (with IS being now the representation of ultimate Evil), a military massacre becomes a democratic intervention. The genocide of the Assad regime against the revolution on the Syrian territory, which killed already 200 000 people, did not deserve a military response from the West. The democratic forces serve their own interests and these consist – like any power – firstly in making themselves indispensable. The revolution in Syria did not fit into this democratic agenda. Up until now, apparently. It is tempting to choose sides in a war. But the search for alliances with the “more libertarian” forces leads us to frontlines that are not ours. The revolution that erupted already in 2011 inside the Syrian borders and that called for dignity and freedom, cannot be summed up in conquered/liberated territories, military brigades, political coalitions or ethnic and religious communities. The resistance to the old and the new rulers in Syria is not the monopoly of a group or a frontline. The solidarity of anarchists goes out to everyone who does not have a power base or territory to defend or conquer, but who just fights for their own emancipation and that of their companions.

Previously a war was supported by a war mobilization and also a war economy, it required a different effort than during a period of peace. But today, the war economy is permanently running, oriented towards international trade – to supply conflicts around the world – and domestic repression. That makes it paradoxically always present but also less visible. The anti-militarist action has no lack of targets, but the sum of targets does not make a perspective emerge. What can an anarchist solidarity with uprisings and revolutions elsewhere, imply here (and specifically those confronting an international coalition of repression)? Do we want to reply to the declarations of war by the democracy (without accepting its rules)? How do we deal with the growing repression against anarchists specifically and how do we avoid the dead-end street of a defensive position?

Questions that by no means are new or original, and can only find a possible answer in the dynamic between actions and ideas. This project might be a contribution to those efforts.

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No illusion, no center of justice, no compromise

Reflections on a specific struggle in Munich

October 2014 - Germany

Munich is the most densely populated city in Germany and every day it becomes tighter:
The city is growing by 100 persons a day and because the borders of the city are fixed, the existing conurbation becomes the terrain on which living and housing of more and more people is concentrated. This enormous growth provides the possibility for state and capital to accelerate and guide the processes of urban transformation and is mainly followed by two consequences: The people who come to Munich in masses are primarily decoyed by the attractive job market of Bavaria's industrial motor or by the resident "elite-universities" and beyond that, they have to be rich enough to assert themselves at the incredibly expensive (and continuously becoming more expensive) housing market. The effect that this process of gentrification and increasing number of yuppies has on poorer social classes is obvious: displacement to the margins of the city or into completely new built and designed quarters made out of concrete (due to their aesthetic monotony popularly called "shoe-box-houses"), or in the end the insight, that there is just no more space for oneself in Munich.

On the other hand, the fastest urban growth (as compared to other big German cities) results in a correspondingly fast restructuring of the whole urban infrastructure. Due to the increasing density of the inhabitants, the capacities of the city to host, to transport, to register and most importantly to control all of them have to increase as well. From the city's point of view growth is always positive, because through this the development and progress of the urban space can be accelerated more quickly. This progress is always following the logic of control, because the requirements are always orientated to maximum security (for the rulers) and maximum profits, and so every city-restructuring project is also a new attempt to widen this control.
Concrete excesses of this progress are not only the everywhere constantly extending picture of big construction sites, but also the extension of the public transport system (second main route of the S-Bahn), extension of the long distance traffic (third runway for planes), extension of the road network (highway tunnels), upgrading of the state´s administration structure (for example the building of the biggest tax office in Europe) or also futuristic plans, like the possible raising of the city center by in between 25 and 60 meters, which more and more say goodbye to the traditional picture of Munich as a "millions-village" without skyscrapers.

The other face of the city...

But since the gap between winners and losers also in the rich Munich is becoming bigger and bigger, phenomenons like increasing delinquency, highly increasing rates of break-ins, increasing homelessness and poverty, more beggars and refugees, more unemployment and precarious working circumstances and the like are turning more and more into problems, which might be an obstacle for the successful progress and a risk for the city´s reputation of being the richest and the supposed most secure German metropolis. So the state sees itself forced to answer this in the shadow of the growth prospering marginality with a comprehensive extension of the repressive structure: More arrests, more cops, more camera surveillance, more ticket controls, more refugee camps, the establishment of zones where begging is banned, campaigns for more phone calls to, support of and trust in the police, more juvenile detention centers and psychiatric institutions, more forced evictions and compulsory hospitalizations and in the end, the biggest future building project of Bavaria: The edification of a new center of justice and penalty.

The armament of domination

Starting in 2015, the huge edification of the center of justice and penalty on an area of 38.000m², planned in the neighbourhood Neuhausen will in the future accommodate all courts and public prosecutors and from 2019 it is going to be the workplace for 1300 legal authorities employees.
The design of the building was drawn with help of an architects' competition, in which 15 architect offices from various countries took part in. The final winner's design of the center of justice and penalty made by the architect office "Frick Krüger Nusser Plan2" distinguished through a "light and friendly foyer", "well and easy functioning supply of prisoners" and a "positive valuation concerning security". "Urban, compact and green" – like this, the seven-floor colossus shall appear, which leaves one third of the area unused thanks to its functional architecture. But this area will soon be used for the building of more judicial machinery edifices.
The same architects have already proved their knowledge and ability to give arresting and punishing institutions a modern and inconspicuous outward appearance in planning already twelve prisons in Germany, also the women and juvenile prison in Munich as well as the palace of justice in Lyon and a "Eu-Prison-Standard" jail in Sarajevo.
Meanwhile the plan for the armament of the Bavarian legal authorities includes also the building of an extra maximum security court room in Munich's super-size-jail Stadelheim (1379 till max. 2100 persons in a state of emergency) for cases of the protection of the state (responsible for all "political cases"), for organized delinquency and for terrorism. The construction started recently.
This additional maximum security court room spares dangerous transports of prisoners through the whole city and it will accommodate the first locked glass box for accused people.

In the belly of the beast

In the context of Munich this building joins into an environment of permanent present and generally noticeable repression. The trio consisting of police, court and prison takes a lot of effort in Bavaria's metropolis of delinquency to fulfil the "Munich-line" of zero tolerance to the highest possible extent. Therefore already minimal signs of delinquency are roughly punished, applying the logic of "who's not listening, has to feel...", because these might be the fertile ground for more criminal acts. Everyone is making this experience and therefore it is just a simple banality to emphasize the harshness of the Bavarian criminal persecution compared to other places. What makes such an undisturbed ruling and punishing sustainably effective is the measure of social pacification, the extent to which people tolerate all of this, the dimension of the paralysing apathy among the exploited surrounded by the spectacle, and the internalization of a culture of self imposed control, surveillance and betraying. This war, this expansion of control in every facet of our life, is most effective when the ones, to whom the war is declared, don´t recognize that this war is waged.

So the apparatus of repression doesn't need just a ruling authority, but also a mass of inferiors, who adopt their social roles and who willingly get a cop implanted into their heads and through this enable the unbroken effect of a general repression. The alliance between state and enduring and disciplined population is the fertile ground for a scenario, in which non-conformity with the dominating rules catches the eye instantly and gets corrected, indicated cracks in the wall of pacification are immediately repaired with the cement of integration and recuperation in the cloak of deceived understanding and supposed cooperativeness and breaks with domination are made successfully invisible and isolated in their social context. The final result of all this is the dispersal of a deeply internalized fear to step out of line.

In terms of this short description of the situation in Munich the building of the center of justice and penalty (which costs 234 000 000 €) marks another step of the protection of domination, which shall perfect, centralize and restructure the judicial machinery in general and make it more secure against external dangers. Through the concentration of all courts and public prosecutors in one single building, a faster, more effective and more secure functioning of the legal authorities will be ensured. The advantages are obvious: Shorter or nearly no distance between different administration offices; less areas, entrances and exits that have to be kept under surveillance etc.. In the long term this means a faster dealing with trials and providing the capacity to convict more people faster. Beyond this, it finally makes various urban processes visible and tangible. Those processes put the restructuring of the whole city itself into a maxi-

mum security court room, in that we are under permanent observation, judgement and in danger to end up behind bars, in concrete forms.

Signs of unrest

But since the edification of the new center of justice and penalty has been made public, growing unrest can be recognized. Through thousands of posters and stickers present everywhere in the city, through leaflets and street newspapers, on banners and through sprayed and painted slogans on walls and in many other ways of expression there is since more than a year the idea articulated, that we have to answer this project of power with a struggle that aims at the prevention of this building. According to the media the consequences of this agitation for the sabotage of the judicial machinery, for direct attacks and for the prevention of the building are until now 220 criminal acts, and so journalists are talking about attacks with colour, smashed windows and burning cars. The state sees itself forced to sensitize the architecture offices and planning offices for these subversive dangers, to especially protect certain persons and buildings, to react with raids for the carrying of stickers against the building of the center of justice and penalty and to already announce that this construction site will be the most secure in the whole city.

The state carefully observes the spreading of diffuse signs of unrest, being it the direct communication on the streets through words or acts, trying to use this specific project of the legal authorities as an opportunity to make on the one hand clear that we all are concerned by this because the punitive glance of the judges observes us all, and on the other hand to animate discussions that are able to formulate, to put in concrete form and into practice a harsh criticism of the optimization and of the spread of the state´s control structures.

This can only happen if reality is understood as the artificial fabrication, that it is: Everything else than inevitable and depending on precision engineers, managers and design engineers, who are responsible for its continuing existence and further development. So the perspective of the prevention of this edification makes nothing less clear than the possibility to attack this daily routine and the permanent option to make the functioning of this constructed fabrication stumble.

Let's attack!

At this, attack must be the basic characteristic of a struggle that wants to enable insurrectional moments. Attack, because the prevention of the center of justice and penalty is not a matter of the municipality, but a matter of our own hands. Attack, because it is always possible and easy to arm one´s own will with the necessary courage and abilities and through this putting theory and practice in coherence. Attack, because only through this the waves of a conflict can leave our own horizon and become visible and generalizable in a social context. If this conflict doesn't take the paths of politics – the paths of delegation and representation, of compromises and negotiations, of efficiency and numbers – but instead strives to initiate social dynamics, then direct, straight, self determined means of conflict and communication have to be chosen. Since it is the essence of revolt to be varied and creative, so our ideas, suggestions and impulses must not adopt a rigid frame. The idea of an independent, flexible and temporary self-organization might take the form and terms of an informal affinity group for us, for others it might be the one of a graffiti crew, a street gang or a neighbourhood association. What becomes the connecting element is not the idea of a progressive change, but the shared attitude towards reality, which is fed through a common hostility: In times of increasing crisis and repression it has already been made clear that this world leaves no other place for us than the one of cleaning away the shit of others. If we are not willing to accept this humiliation, we are put in one of the cells of the city.
No hope, no illusion, no anti-utopia, no imagination of an other administration, but the will for pure negation is the mainspring for struggle. And this struggle is in its most natural way not differing from walking through the streets and fucking them up, interrupting the regulation of person- and commodity flows and giving the idea of vandalism as a plaything between exclusion and driving out its meaning back by showing that it is only possible by destruction to appropriate this city.

When this destructive frenzy takes shape, spray can, paving stone, bolt cutter, lighter or crowbar are exchangeable means in the hands of the ganging up horde. As anarchists we should not have the arrogant illusion that our means and ways are more elevated. On the contrary we should animate and set on the mutual infection of these different initiatives by seeing to it that the negation in its different ways of expression again and again scratches the ugly grimace of the city without fear of contacts and through this gets present and accessible. This attempt has to be connected with estimating the intensity of a social conflict on the social terrain and by the sifting through and subjective experiencing of the given reality to ponder the suitability of one´s own means and ways.
The end of social pacification marks itself often through the end of illusions towards the existent, social conflicts often articulate themselves irrational and not by means of statistics or the media and communication is most often fertile where people are open for it and social relations are still existing and living in the streets.

Uncertain experiments

By putting the focus on a particular structure of domination and on the henchmen standing behind, attacks can not only be concentrated, but can also transform the definite and local expanding of control, in the shape of the edification of a building, into a laboratory, whether,

where and how in a specific struggle of an anarchist minority a diffusion and multiplication of offensive initiatives can be animated and organized.

At this attempt many questions develop, which can not be answered easily: Is it possible that the edification of a single building becomes a topic for a metropolis where millions of people are living, and by which also the excluded in peripheral areas feel directly affected?
How can we open spaces and opportunities for communication or usurp these spaces, without disappearing from the streets into a niche?
How can we oppose the always present danger of repression by police and by many citizens – without ignoring it – and nevertheless articulate our ideas, proposals and hostilities openly?
Is it generally possible and necessary to rub the sand of peoples' own illusions out of their eyes and to pull them out of the bog of passivity?
What ideas of an informal organization of activities among very different people with different motivations and backgrounds do we have?
And is it in the end possible to internationalize the revolt through the struggle against internationally connected and agitating henchmen of power?

How and where answers to these and other questions can be found is always an experiment.



Hit where it hurts

Lucioles - August 2014 - France

On the morning of Wednesday, July 23, a fire broke out in a facility of the SNCF (a switching station of the railway company), in Vitry-sur-Seine (94). Something that is not so surprising: if you read the *faits divers* of the local news mongers there are often such episodes. Technical accident, lack of attention from the staff, heat (?)... Or malice. The act of someone who wanted to maybe just have fun, or who perhaps wanted to vent his sound rage against a cog in this world – and not the smallest, in this case! So an act done "in the heat of the moment", without much forethought, perhaps without too much wondering about what this building was? Or the alternative that could most worry the SNCF and the cops: the person who was holding the lighter knew very well what it was about and knew the possible consequences?

However, all that is known about the fire and its origin we are told by the newspapers – so the cops. And, of course, they do not like at all that someone cares too much about their things.
Because a switching station is a cabin with the devices that control traffic on a section of the railway. The restoration of the station of Vitry required the interruption of electricity on the overhead lines. All trains and RER departing or arriving at Gare d'Austerlitz (which is directly upstream of Vitry) were therefore cancelled on Wednesday the 23 and for a part of Thursday.
In Ville d'Avray (92) in late February 2013, a similar fact was even more "effective" (although on a smaller line). Again, fire (accidental, if one wants to believe the SNCF) had destroyed "the electrical and computer systems controlling the traffic lights, switches and security systems" [Le Parisien]. For several weeks no train circulated on the line U and also partly not on the line L of the Transilien (suburban railway).
But there are not only the switching stations... Big traffic problems, in particular for the TGV (high speed trains), occurred in the region of Chambery, in early March 2012. At different places (away from urbanized areas), cables along the rails had burned (that sabotage was done in solidarity with opponents of a new TGV line jailed in Italy). Who has a good memory will also remember the mess that there was at Gare du Nord after a "small fire" in the box of a signalling system in early May 2008. For a few hours, about 300 trains, from the RER (suburban railway) to the TGV with destination northern Europe, were blocked.

What might be interesting to learn from these small *faits divers* is that any physical structure – the network of the railway, for example – has weak points. The same type of event (accident, sabotage) can produce effects more or less significant depending on where it occurs. Any network has specific points, knots, which put out of service, could generate a large impact on the whole, perhaps (why not?) leading to a sort of "domino effect". The networks that run this world (those carrying people, goods, energy, information...) extend everywhere under our feet, over our heads, next to our home, in many boxes on every street corner, often far from the prying eyes of cops and cameras.

To all those who know how to look...



Against alliances, against centrality

Aversión - September 2014 - Spain

Tumultuous times make it clear that we are alone, and that it is necessary to rack our heads well if we want to succeed in putting into practice what we can do against what is trying to devour, eradicate or assimilate us. Not few people are proposing the way of political *ambiguousness*, of temporal – or not so temporal – camouflage as to grow in numbers and as to strengthen ourselves in this way. But we are not so sure that the *force* is just a matter of numbers.

Everywhere you can hear "that we have to get out of the lair". But to what end? To put ourselves into a bigger lair that is even more ambiguous, and that is actually just another hole in the field?

"We have to make alliances". As anarchists we have to make alliances, well, let's say that is so. But then, with whom?

It is said that against fascism, we have to forget our small differences at the expense of this common evil, to create an *anti* which wraps us all equally up. Equally? The question then comes to our minds if we haven't learned anything, since such alliances always end up exploding in our faces. And an answer would be even more necessary on the Iberian Peninsula, where it should be clear that the revolution of the Thirties went to hell because of the thrust anarchists put in alliances with the politicians and because of their participation in the management of the misery (that is to say, in Government), fruit of despair or good faith, which accelerated the process of decomposition and the advance of fascism. We are not *against fascism* because it would be the worst of all evil. We are against fascism in the same way that we are against parliamentarism, against democracy, against authority. Therefore, to join up, as anarchists and antiauthoritarians, with leftist splinter groups (we almost fell into the mistake of writing "splinter groups and individualities", but it always concerns splinter groups) who are in favour of institutional politics, who reinforce and underpin the system of representation and who function in a hierarchical way, with their spokes persons, delegates and leaders, is sentencing to disaster. Against this "evil of all evil" that fascism seems to be, we see in every alliance of *anti* not only a tactical error but also a horrible factor of amnesia.

Facing repression, that other great ghost against which one also has to prepare oneself, something similar happens. To prepare yourself to *confront it* is not a numerical question, but depends rather on determination. We could be thousands and continue to perceive repression and its whole apparatus – judges, police, prisons, psychologists, prison guards, lawyers and a long etcetera – as a monster which still gobbles us. If we deny perceiving repression for what it is and for what it represents, for its function as a dissuasive element of the State, we will always remain weak against this beast that devours poor people and rebels all over the place. Like in the case of fascism, here also many anarchists and antiauthoritarians forget everything, including basic principles like autonomy and self-organisation, and start to forge all kinds of anti-repressive alliances with specialists and lawyers, up to even with politicians (or

aspirant politicians, which in this case is the same) and involved journalists, always in a broad spectrum of *movementism*. One has to keep in mind that in those cases of anti-repressive alliances, one has to give in to the dominant logic of victimism. And instead of openly assuming what we think or propose, and defend what we have – or haven't – done, we have to bow our heads and keep our mouths shut. The specialists will say us it is just "a strategy against repression". The problem is that this "strategy" becomes always more usual and the sole fact of affirming a confrontational attitude is perceived as something "psychopathological" or as desire for "martyrdom".

And to finish and close of this question of big alliances, we still have to face the one of the messianic dream of the Big Anarchist Organisation. Forget the differences and the reasons for these differences is the premise to establish this definitive organisation. So many years of debates and reflections, so many headaches which brought us to the conclusion that all idea of centrality is contrary to freedom as we anarchists understand it, and there, like a sudden blow, on a moment in which all – including those who are on the other side of the barricade – are putting into question the role of centralism, that old cult of the Organisation is dusted off, that old putrefied mummy is brought back. To try to solve the question of organisation (in lower case letters) with the creation of an Organisation (with a capital letter), means, rather than solving it, resort to the most basic, banal and automatic way of doing so. There exist as many organisational forms as there are needs to realise certain struggle goals, but if the question is bad formulated, it can happen that what you are looking for is to finish the rooftop without even haven thought about the foundations.

But okay, it seems certain that if we do not learn out of the experiences of the post, we will in the end stumble over the same stone. Maybe the stone should be big enough so as to never again forget it, even though in this case the hit doesn't have to be very hard as to not provoke the next time, once again, this amnesia.

The problems which were touched here are real. Fascism has always been around, even though it doesn't stop growing and adapting. Also repression, which is becoming always more hard. The question of organisation, well, we wouldn't define it as much as a problem, but it poses problems. But nevertheless, the solution cannot be to resort to the *lesser evil*.



We are attack, we are fire against the state

September 2014 - Chile

We come from everywhere …
We come from the attacks on police and jailers stations, to powerful centres, churches and institutions of state-capital. We have manufactured explosive devices, we know their uses and consequences and the time to act, we come from the logic and practices of the conspiracy for years.
We organized informally without leaderships and raising autonomy, forging clandestine networks that will not be detected by repression. We continue, because we have never stopped…

About the explosive device detonated in the "Subcentro" recently, which caused various injuries to passers-by, without being judges, we raise and defend our position.

In the actions that we have perpetrated, in the complicities that have materialized, in the attacks developed by other comrades who we don't know personally, searching anonymously the path of direct action, we always clearly identified the enemy.

The enemy are those who holds power or arms himself in its defence, becoming a target of attacks, but not who endorses or passively succumbs to the domain.

We are not part of the citizenship, as they allow submission and perpetuate order, but that is not to equivocate the role of citizenship with the powerful, the slave with the master. It is not the general public, or any passer-by who is the goal of our actions.

We understand the attack and self-defence as an act that challenges and seeks to hit all the machinery that tries to make us submit, as well as protect us against any repressive advance, independent of the uniform that it could wear.
Whoever decides to take violence to defend the powerful, is situated in the battle field and must bear the cost of that, but this, as another comrades said, is not a blind fight or blind hit without having and clarity about who it hits.

…

It is the State and its terror politics that considers lives as simply numbers on the statistics of their share of power. We take distance from that in projections and ideas, but especially in practice, which undoubtedly we differ. In this there should not be space for doubt.

We desire and act for destruction and fight the enemy, we arm ourselves to achieve this. We use and demand the use of violence to face authority, but our hits do not seek to cause harm to anyone who just travelled through

the city. That would mean that anyone, by the fact of circulating, is an accomplice to power or collaborator, with absolutely no fundamental reality to support that. Those are not our ways, not the fundamental point of view nor the horizon of the road of direct action that we walk for years.

Just as we do not let our security by at random, learning from own advanced techniques of the enemy, we also do not give space to random about the safety of those who can hang around our targets of attack. So we do not trust or delegate the care of any civilian to the good work of the police in the area of cordon or evacuation. We are not indifferent to the pain or injury that a simple passer-by may receive.

It is not the citizens who should fear for our actions. If they feel terror it should be for the misery of life imposed by the State, through each of the gears that make the machinery of destruction, by the police easily shooting them down, by the criminalization of any behaviour that is out of the established norms, by the economic asphyxia that leads to suicide or by the advancement of social control. Those who should fear our actions, in every aspect of their lives and security, are the representatives of dominion … We are approaching.

We don't write to condemn the use of violence, but to vindicate the uses we have communicated, by making clear our ideas in the insurrection, which do not consider as an attack on civilians.

The call is to act, in complicity and affinity, proliferating groups of attack, acting for liberation, but considering our goal is to clearly spread who is the enemy to attack. Our practices are part of the message. Our strokes should be accurate, without fear, without inaccuracies.

The State is the Terrorist
We salute the recent attacks on churches and police stations
Against all forms of power.
For Anarchy and Total Liberation…
We continue to grow…

Attack's Cells for Liberation



For a practical critique

Concerning the action which took place in front of the UAHC University in Santiago on the 23th of September

September 2014 - Chile

In a climate of growing hostility, persecution and media terror, we continue to claim the violence against State and capital!

Following the explosion of a bomb in a corridor of the commercial centre of the metro station Escuela Militar, the dreams of the press and the State become reality. From now on, they will be able to openly say that the explosive attacks also target ordinary people, and in this logic, they can sharpen their repression against insurgent groups and individuals. The situation was suited for the vultures to create, from out of their media, a climate of insecurity and media terror. The press didn't waver in denouncing the violence of the subversive groups. Inside the anarchist and anticapitalist circles, many things have been said. It was said that the characteristics of the explosion did not correspond to what those who attack the structures of power do, that the attack could be associated to certain sectors of the police, to extreme rightwing groups or to so-called revolutionaries who would not have very clear goals. Today, three persons are accused and in prison for this attack and a communiqué is circulating on the Internet of which we do not know the origin and which claims the attack.

We are not going to speak about the accused in this text, because first of all we do not want to play judges, and secondly because we know all too well the schemes of the State and the bourgeois press when it is about proving efficiency and control in the persecution of an internal enemy while taking advantage of these situations to justify their repression.

Concerning the authors and the motivations for the attack, it is still not very clear to us, but facing the climate of insecurity and terror that power and its media want to create, our answer remains the same: we continue to act violently against power, intensifying the conflict, knowing clearly who the enemy is. Yes, knowing clearly who the enemy is, because our enemies are those who are in power and their armed dogs that ensure order; and our attacks are directed against them. That's why we cannot associate us with blind and irresponsible attacks who wound ordinary people. If we understand very well the role played by the passivity of the citizens in the submission to and the maintenance of power, we cannot put on the same level the responsibility of the alienated slave and that of the powerful who is the true responsible of the exploitation and the alienation that it produces, and without which this order could not continue to exist

one minute more. We cannot consider valid an attack against authority which wounds ordinary people, and we are not indifferent towards suffering, even more when it is used to boost a scenario of a witch hunt directed by the State with the support of a growing number of citizens who know believe they are potential targets.

But facing this climate of mediatised insecurity for the citizens and the repressive hostility against us, we choose to not bow our heads and to not distinguish ourselves from the use of violence against the State, against capital and its dogs. We claimed this violence yet once again by going out into the streets, erecting barricades, handing out flyers and reading out loud a communiqué which explains our action to those standing around, to then fight the cops (who arrived shooting lead bullets from a far away distance, because they were scared by the molotovs hurled at them).

May it be clear for the power that in spite of the unfavourable situation they can create, we will not drop the use of violence against authority, against the State, against capital, and it is probable that the street fight against their cops is just a small gesture (and even a repetitive one), but that doesn't mean that we will abandon our methods, while we are venture into the discovery of others methods that bring us always more closer to the enemy. It is just a matter of reflection, patience and practice before we will find ourselves face to face with the enemy.

We launch a call for reflection and practice.

Let's not recoil in the face of a hostile climate!



Action and solidarity are urgent. All the rest are excuses.

Sin Banderas Ni Fronteras - October 2014 - Chile

Reflections about the advance of repression in Chile. Propagating solidarity with Juan, Nataly and Guillermo.

1. And there we go again. Because the war continues.

After an accumulative cycle of street agitation, mass mobilisations and expansion of social conflicts in Chile, power has tried to generate mechanisms favouring the continuity and the reinforcement of the model of democratic domination.

The government on duty has used various tactics allowing to progressively nullify the discontent to avoid the cracks in the questioned social order to spread or become deeper. The mass mobilisations which questioned the economic and social model produced in dictatorship were answered by proposals of social reform recuperating the slogans of the protest movements, including them as part of the solutions configured from out of the State. The critiques against the "political elite" were answered by "opening up" the parliamentary rooms for social and student leaders. The critiques against the "old politics behind closed doors" were answered by organizing round tables of dialogue with citizens' organisations as to co-opt the demands and strengthen the democratic and participatory image of the State. These things were implemented together with other measures trying to broaden social consensus, weaken the questioning of the dominant order and secure a new cycle of the country's governability.

But foreseeing future crises of the model of capitalist-democratic domination, this "social agenda" of the State was accompanied by a parallel repressive policy aiming at the isolation and punishment of the radicalised sectors propagating no-negotiation, intransigence and confrontation with the existing order. This has already been explained and analysed by other comrades.

We would like to deepen out an aspect related to this last point, concerning the configuration of a new counterinsurgency policy aiming at the annihilation of all radical questioning of domination. The political and experimental priority of this policy is nowadays the offensive against the most combative anarchist circles, the ones that wage for insurrection and the polymorphous offensive against all forms of authority. We, individuals fighting for freedom and an antiauthoritarian nucleus for agitation and propaganda, come from these circles.

In this text we take the time to reflect. We do not want to repeat the things that have already been said, but we insist on reaffirming our attitudes of war, expressing our position in the middle of a new context of growing repression. We believe this is a key moment in the continuity of the struggle against the capitalist-authoritarian social order in our territory. Therefore it is important to give ourselves the necessary time and analyse the reality we are living in to give strength to the expansion of the polymorphous attack against the system of domination and to sharpen positions between those who are fighting.

Therefore, first of all, the ideas we are expressing here spring forth out of the heat of the practice of anarchy and above all want to reflect on "how to continue", without falling into the immobility the enemy is looking for, or in simplistic lectures which get overwhelmed by a dynamic and permanently changing context.

2. Democratic dominion in Chile and its counterrevolutionary offspring

To avoid a crisis of the institutional order and to secure a new cycle for the model of democratic domination, the current counterinsurgency policy of the Chilean State was developed in commissions and security summits using the new wave of incendiary-explosive attacks showing an increase in the year 2014 in comparison to last two years, as an excuse.

Picking up the repressive teachings of the civil-military dictatorships of the last half of the century and their continuities under democratic regimes, the Chilean State has made his own experience – with good moves and mistakes – first with the disarticulation of the Marxist subversion, and more recently with attempts to annihilate the autonomous-anti-authoritarian insurrection. Power is today giving birth to a new counterinsurgency policy by grabbing the hand of various already known tactics, bringing together old and new methods, today configured in a model that can be applied to the current needs of domination.

To enforce selective repression against specific belligerent groups which exist today and those who might come in the future, the Chilean State is reconfiguring and strengthening its intelligence apparatus, trying to grant more authority to his police and include the figure of the undercover cop to infiltrate antagonistic groups, with a priority on what they call "insurrectional anarchism". They try to obtain information about the struggle circles, look for proof as to put comrades in prison. They also try to favour armed operations, instigated by undercover cops and "monitored" by the police which drag the comrades into the claws of repression. With this they also try to feed distrust between comrades, isolation between groups and moral and material weakening of the forces hostile to power.

At the same time, the repressive apparatus is strengthening itself in its juridical dimension, to be able to impose more years of prison to those who are detained during actions of antagonist violence, reinforcing the Law on Firearms and the antiterrorist law, putting things into place as to ensure that in the future any act that puts the stability of the social order in danger can be crushed by the legal machinery of power.

All this has been taking shape in the preceding months in combination with a communicational deployment trying to clear out the terrain for repressive operations, fomenting collective panic with the created figure of the "terrorist", generating consensus as to ensure that repression can advance without any questioning by a part of the population. With the media bombardment of images and headlines on the "terrorist threat", power is getting ready to empty any claim that accompanies the violent action against the established order of its political and revolutionary content.

This procedure is known, but has been strengthened in the current times, positions the mass media not as an accessory of the plans of power, but rather as a new occupation army which aims at penetrating the minds and behaviour of the masses.

3. About an action that generated debates to sharpen our objectives.

As is already known, the 8th of September 2014, an extinguisher with black powder exploded in the corridor of a commercial gallery in a metro station in Las Condes. The act generated a lot of confusion, because 12 persons were wounded, something which was easily assimilated by power to feed the "antiterrorist" hysteria and insert by shock means the idea into people's mind that terrorism "is just around the corner."

Other comrades already spoke out and reflected on this action, mainly while the attack remained anonymous and when power easily benefited with the consequences of the act. But then the action was claimed by an anarchist group who said they warned the police some minutes before as they didn't want to hurt consumers and passers-by, clearing up a bit of the doubts.

About this action and its claim, we share its objective of hitting the powerful and not hurting the passers-by, but we are clear in saying that the chosen place was not a den of the powerful and that one has not foreseen that the taken protective measures would not be sufficient.

Discussing the first thing, the chosen place, has to do with the discussion on the objectives of our struggle: who is our enemy and how to hit him, how do we project the offensive in the time-space, which instruments do we use, when and where etc. This is a responsibility of the anarchist, anti-authoritarian and autonomous-anticapitalist circles in general, because the debate and the reflection up on our polymorphous acting is an indispensable instrument to refine struggle positions, to fill up our empty drifting about and to overcome the weaknesses that any of us could have.

But on the other hand there is as well a sphere which is part of the polymorphous struggle but which is more related to the operative aspect of the actions taken by the direct attack groups: how to move in the city during an action, how to not leave indices, measures of operative security, etc. Concerning this, we are emphatic in expressing that this is the responsibility of those who realise actions or want to contribute to their development, and not of those who criticise with back alley comments pointing out the "errors" of others, but not

risking the slightest portion of their lives in the polymorphous struggle against power.

4. Solidarity with the imprisoned comrades is urgent action. All the rest are excuses.

While you are reading this, three comrades find themselves in prison under the accusation of participation in different explosive attacks.

The whole juridical, police and journalist apparatus jumped on the lives of Juan, Nataly and Guillermo who were arrested on the 18th of September with a new televised repressive operation. They haven't sent out public letters yet, but they are comrades who took a defiant stance towards the cops and the press. At this moment, this is enough for us. Maybe later, when their positions will be spread to the outside, there will be more, less or no affinity, but today the solidarity with the three comrades is something urgent which doesn't accept excuses.

"*I have difficulties to be in solidarity with them because I do not share the action of which they are accused*," some might say, starting from the mistake to consider the comrades "guilty". "*We have to wait first for their public letters before standing in solidarity*," others could put forward, as if the image of Juan shouting "down with the police state" and of the other two comrades coming out of the police station with their heads high while the charges of terrorism where formalised would not be enough.

We stand in solidarity with Juan, Nataly and Guillermo because they are comrades – and not just "individuals" – whose lives are put in prison as a part of the play of power to disarticulate every type of opposition to the order of domination.

And moreover, in a context in which the enemy tries to strengthen itself, solidarity with the comrades in prison should be assumed as a part of our individual and collective responsibility of protagonists in a continuous and polymorphous struggle which refuses to shut up facing the offensives of power.

And it is the offensive and solidarity action – and not the critiques form a comfortable position – which will enable us to overcome difficult moments and strengthen the continuity of the anti-authoritarian struggle in this territory.

5. Once again we will overcome the obstacles by confronting power with polymorphous action.

A surrounding of struggle where debate and reflection are rare or superficial, where friend-ism and self-indulgence reign, where the good intentions and the radical speeches do not materialize in concrete practice, is a surrounding destined to be easily destroyed in its convictions and action perspectives.

We say this because we think that the dialogue and reflection between comrades is urgent today as to ensure that the anarchic acting inscribes itself into processes of which the horizons of permanent confrontation make the struggle advance by building relations of true affinity that go beyond friend-ism, where comrades feel the urgency of action, and equip their projects with hypothesis aiming at the continuity of the conflict despite of the repressive hits.

We will not be terrified and we will continue our propagandistic acting, spreading reflections that emanate from the anti-authoritarian offensive. We will continue to intervene in the grey streets with our propaganda, publishing our intermittent journal, generating communicative bridges with comrades of other territories through translations and information on important events, for brotherly debate and solidarity agitation with the imprisoned comrades. We will not step one millimeter back from the propagation of the confrontation with power in the struggle for freedom, in which all forms of action – from propaganda to armed action – are a contribution if they set out the total destruction of domination.

It is essential to show that the struggle continues with our acting, that nothing has stopped here, that the struggle against authority has not been defeated, while we continue actively and strengthen ourselves.

You can continue the battle as long as you want to fight, and the reflection which reinforces convictions, values and ideas put into practice, is especially important today, as it is on any moment.

Today the moment asks us for urgent offensive action, materialized in street agitation, in sharpening the conflicts which are questioning the social order, in propaganda, debate and wide spreading of the idea of destruction of power, always aiming to expand and reinforce convictions, to strengthen ties of affinity and struggle commitments, feeling the need to create groups and to organize between comrades in affinity with the goal of intervening in the reality from an offensive approach of total liberation.

In short, our individual and collective strength in the coming times will be rooted in the practical outcome that we give to a necessary process of reflection and self-critique which brings us to acquire or reinforce those elements, capacities, knowledge and experiences that enable to support a continuous confrontation, a permanent offensive that is nourished by good moves and bad moves and that doesn't weaken in front of repressive operations, so that our offensive, and the comrades who decide to throw their lives into the polymorphous struggle against power, do not start off from zero once again.

Therefore every day our life in war is incandescent energy obstructing the free flow of domination.
Because the destruction of the existing order depends on us.
Action and solidarity cannot wait.



Car, guns, autonomy
On the finer points of the recent revolt in Ferguson, MO

October 2014 - USA

The following is a transcript of a conversation between two friends shortly after the insurgency in Ferguson, Missouri. (+++) was there and (***) wasn't, but both of us have participated in anti-police uprisings in the last several years on the West Coast and in the Midwest. We're publishing this in an effort to explore the complexities of recent events in the United States, but also to contribute to the ongoing discussions and attacks against the existing order, everywhere.

*** One the most interesting experiment by rebels in the Bay Area in the past years was the establishment of Oscar Grant Plaza (the home of Occupy Oakland also known as the Oakland Commune) as a police-free zone in the fall of 2011. The logistics of this experiment were actually fairly simple: whenever the police attempted to enter the encampment, a crowd would gather around them and force them to leave. At times this meant screaming, while at others it was merely a matter of informing the officers that they would have a riot on their hands if they intruded. People at the encampment took several measures to defend themselves from the presence of the police. Materially, communards stockpiled materials to build barricades and projectiles to be used against any unwanted police presence. They re-appropriated police barricades for their own purposes and built barricades of their own. They tore up the paving stones of the plaza to be hurled at police raiders. Culturally, the police-free environment reproduced itself by fostering hostility toward the police, and a culture of street-based resistance to them. When the camp fell under siege, the cops and their stations fell victim to a chaotic wave of retribution. As demonstrations and riots against the police reach their limits in time, we consistently ask ourselves how to sustain these suspensions of order longer than a few days. One possibility is that the cultivation of zones free from the police could provide an answer this dilemma.

If by maintaining a police free zone, the Oakland Commune offered a contribution to the struggles of everyone who works to create territories against the police – to make their homes, neighborhoods and cities entirely hostile to police occupation – it could be argued that the recent uprising in Ferguson significantly expanded upon this experiment. It seems as though the revolt in Fer-

guson is unprecedented in recent years, if not in many peoples' lifetimes, in terms of the duration but also the intensity of what happened. It also appears that, similar to the situation in Oakland, people in Ferguson were able to seize space and to create a police-free zone in a way more combatively than had been done before.

+++ I would agree to a degree. I think there were steps taken towards creating a liberated space, or an autonomous zone. In general, I think a riot is a situation where a space is opened that is free of police or the State's laws. So every night that there was rioting there were these temporary lawless and police free zones opened up. What made this different from other riots though, is how sustained the rioting was. Also how after three days of rioting, people reclaimed the burned down QT as central hub of activity for the uprising. I think the significance of the QT was that it expanded the autonomy and lawlessness of the rioting at nights into the daytime. It would be dishonest to say the lawlessness and anti-police sentiment of the riots completely transferred to the QT. There were times when high ranking police officers came into the parking lot to make statements to the press. But it did at least create an environment that was incredibly hostile to them, and usually any time a squad car or low ranking officer came into sight, they were attacked or shouted out of the area. It was obvious to the police and to the participants of the rebellion, that the QT was our space, not the space of the police or the capitalists.

*** It does feel like its easier for people who weren't there to see the more spectacular things – the looting, the arsons, the molotov cocktails – but unfortunately the efforts to create space without police is harder for people to see from afar. It seems obvious that this was really central to the ferocity of what was happening. What did it feel like to be at the QT? What was that space like? Also what were some of the more specific ways that people prevented the police from coming there or other areas that had been carved out?

+++ Well for the most part the QT was this incredibly festive and joyful place in the daytime where people were doing graffiti, driving up with giant barbeques and giving away hundreds of hot dogs; everyone brought water to share, nothing cost money, everything was free. It became a weird cultural center as well. There were rappers, people break dancing, a teenage step-crew came in. There was a joyful street fair atmosphere at times. At the same time people would be handing out masks for the night, sharing stories from the nights before. At one point I hung out with a man who shared pictures of all the shoes he'd looted the night before and we traded stories. People were talking about what to do if they gas this way, what to do if they come from that way. So while it was this festive and celebratory atmosphere it was clearly also a space where people were forming strategies and talking and connecting. Since it was the central gathering point, everyday you'd come back and you'd start to see people and recognize faces; maybe you'd have talked to someone the night before or you'd engaged in something with them and you'd be able to see them again and talk; you'd begin to form relationships and share ideas. That was really exciting.

Toward the night the police would eventually push towards the QT, but the QT itself was about half a mile from where most of the conflicts happened, so often they'd only be able to reach it after hours and hours of street fighting. It took them so long because they were terrified of coming into the crowd, especially during the day when there would be thousands of people around. The St. Louis area has a history of police being shot at, and police are very aware of that. The police know people are armed and willing to shoot. From the beginning of the uprising, rebels made this very clear: one of the first things to happen after they killed Mike Brown was shots being fired into the air. And then Sunday, the first night of rioting, during the looting, people were again firing shots. I can think of one particular situation where the police tried to push in, and people formed a line to fight them off. As the standoff was ending, the police cowardly gassed the crowd and left. Instantly there were gunshots at the police all up and down that mile stretch of road. You could hear gunshots everywhere, and see people jumping out of cars to shoot; shooting at them, shooting in their general direction. People learned that you didn't even need to shoot at them, but simply shooting in their general direction or making it known that you were armed was enough to keep the police back. So the guns kept them at bay. It was the first time in my life that I've ever seen that level of blatant armed action in a riot or demonstration or whatever you want to call what was going on up there.

Secondly, the other thing that I'd never seen before, specific to this situation was the car culture and the way cars were used in a few ways to confuse the police, block them and also just tie them up. West Florissant, the major street where all the rioting and looting and fighting was happening, is a four lane highway. And so up and down the strip people were using it as a cruising ground with countless cars packed with people, blaring music, with half a dozen kids on the hood, honking horns, and everyone screaming. This created a situation where it was impossible for the police to drive into the crowd; the cars were so dense. And also the general noise added to the insanity of the situation, so it was totally nuts to be out there. It was a situation that was completely uncontrollable and they had no idea what to do. If they came in on foot, they were attacked; if they came in cars, the cars would get stuck and they were attacked. Also a lot of the guns were kept in peoples' cars, so people were mobile and armed. At times cars were also weapons. On one night cars actually crashed into police lines. People would use the cars as barricades; everyone would drive and park their cars across the street and form lines behind them. I remember at one point two young girls parked their cars hood to hood blocking all four lanes of traffic and on the other side of the cars, facing the police,

everyone had guns. The cars were used as barricades to shoot from, as a means to stay mobile, as celebratory parade vehicles, and in general a way to confuse and intimidate the police. So I really think these two things particular to Ferguson, the gun culture and the car culture, helped to create and keep this autonomous police-free zone. Not to mention the fact that there were thousands of people participating.

*** I'm under the impression, from a few accounts, that it wasn't just the QT that the police were afraid to enter. I've heard that they mostly limited their activity to West Florissant and that there were certain streets and certain neighborhoods they wouldn't enter.

+++ *That's definitely true. Particularly the neighborhood where Mike Brown lived, Canfield Apartments, off Canfield Ave. The police would not drive down that street. People quickly learned that, but enforced that also. And so as the night went on and the police would force people off the main strip, people would fall back a block or half a block and that was often where people would shoot at the police from. They'd drive down the strip and get shot at from the side streets. Anytime a cop did come into the side streets, people would fall back further into the neighborhoods. If a cop tried to follow further they'd get shot at from the bushes, from the houses, from cars. People burned trash in the streets so they couldn't come in. And so it was a repeated thing, night after night, that people would be fighting in west Florissant until the overwhelming police presence (including teargas and rubber bullets) forced them off the main street. They'd then either fight to keep the police out of the neighborhoods or they'd wait until the gas cleared to go fight on the street again.*

*** Thinking back to the Oakland Commune encampment, it is obvious that creating a space where police couldn't enter was crucial to that struggle. But what I found especially wonderful was that it was more than just a defensive zone; that it became a base of sorts from where other attacks could be carried. On several occasions demonstrations would leave from the camp; because media cameras weren't allowed in, it was relatively safe for people to change clothes and put on masks there. On probably a dozen instances in the first few weeks of the camp, nearby police offices and vehicles were trashed. Do you feel that the space carved out in Ferguson, at the QT and elsewhere, helped to spread offensive maneuvers, beyond being a space to gather and to defend?

+++ *I think there were bits of both. There were points at night where people would be there, and would get organized to go loot somewhere further away. And maybe people would have taken the initiative to do that even if they hadn't been in Ferguson on that strip, but I really do think that everyone being there together allowed people to begin to act collectively. We were out there one night and people started chanting "Walmart! Walmart!" and everyone started running to their cars, doing donuts, and peeling out. Walmart was four miles away from where the riots were taking place, and so without the context of a place where people could discuss "oh we should go loot Walmart!" and feel safe and comfortable enough to do that, I don't think that would have happened. In some ways it did allow for that type of spreading. But, in other ways I think it didn't, because people were so attached to this space they'd liberated (and it did really feel like a liberated space) that people couldn't imagine expanding or leaving. People were so focused on the QT and Canfield and West Florissant that it seemed hard to imagine the rioting spreading to somewhere else. That space had become so important to people, and because of that people were willing to do a lot to defend it. So to a degree it was used as a space to plan out attacks or expropriations in other parts of the city, but the rebellion never really spread far beyond that central area.*

*** Its inspiring to hear you talk about part of Ferguson as a liberated space because this is the same way that many of us thought of the Oakland Commune encampment. The first thing that happened when we took the plaza was to change the name to Oscar Grant Plaza, and with that it was almost as if a spell had been cast over the space. Things felt different when you were within it. A lot of people talked about time feeling different when in that space; the concerns and pressures of their relationships and jobs and all the things that would usually weigh on them seemed to melt away when people walked into the camp. I think that in that space more things felt possible and to me that was something I haven't experienced elsewhere – this immense opening up of possibilities and the ability to talk to people in a way that previously felt impossible. It feels like an entirely different world, so far removed from a life of work and responsibilities and indignities. In a sense this is maybe what's at stake in creating spaces like this: creating magic places where we can discover new things about ourselves.

+++ *Definitely. In a lot of ways it felt similar. One of the small roles anarchists had was to push for a name change for the QT; people started calling it Mike Brown Plaza, sort of reminiscent of the occupation movement. It was clear knowledge that we hadn't been given the right to assemble or protest or whatever. Everyone knew we could only do what we were doing because we had taken it. And because of that knowledge that we had taken the power away from the police, Mayor and Governor, the space became incredibly important to people. So yeah, a similar thing happened. Time didn't make sense there. Somehow you'd be there and all of a sudden eight hours would have disappeared. I remember one night, we were all hanging out, there had been a lot of looting, the liquor store was on fire and we were all just sitting around watching it burn and this man said "fuck, what time is it!? I have to go to work tomorrow." Our friend laughed because she also had to go to work in the morning and she asked, "do you really want to know?" and*

he replied "no, fuck that; time doesn't matter. Fuck work, that doesn't matter." and he just went back to partying. So yeah, things changed, and like you said, the ability to talk to people really changed. St. Louis is an incredibly segregated place where racial tension is visceral and real, but up there the tension eased. People could see who was there. People could see, oh you're here, I'm here too, this is a thing we share in common and can bond over. This was especially true between the militants in the uprising. A mutual respect was developed between people who were fighting. So it became much easier to talk to people. These identities, these constrictions that society puts upon us to keep us separate, began to fade away, even if for the briefest moments. Obviously there were still pretty intense dynamics around race and gender or peoples perceived backgrounds or motivations, but in some way it did begin to dissolve.

*** Thinking back again to the Oakland Commune, and how important the camp was in creating these types of possibilities and relationships, it becomes obvious that the downside of course is that so much seemed to disappear after the camp was raided and taken from us. Once the police enforced a total militarized occupation of the space and made it impossible to reclaim, it did really feel like the beginning of the end. From there it felt like any attempt to create similar spaces or keep up momentum were outright crushed. So I'm wondering how the eventual fencing off and re-occupation (by police) of the QT affected what was going on in the riots, if at all.

+++ I mean it could be a coincidence, but it felt real that the day they fenced off the QT (ten days or so after the initial rioting), was the first night that social peace returned to the streets of Ferguson. Once they'd taken this space away people didn't feel the ability to congregate and lost this very socially important space. So a lot of the combativeness disappeared. Also people were tired and the national guard was on the streets, and so this combined with recuperation by leftists and religious leaders helped to end things. It was a really big blow to the uprising to lose the QT, and then lose the streets of West Florissant.

*** For me, this brings up the questions of anarchists' relationship to spaces like these where previously unimaginable types of rebellions are playing out. Others who've participated in moments like these, where the activity of everyday people vastly outpaces what anarchists are doing, have posed the question of how to act alongside them or not. It seems as though there are two ideas. One of which is to be there, among others, to share the knowledge and tactical perspectives we have; to be within the crowd helping to push things where we can. Another idea is that rather than participating in the streets in these specific places (the plazas, etc), we could be advancing our own projectuality elsewhere and could find other openings and moments to act and carry out our intentions. Based on your experiences in Ferguson, how do you think about this question?

+++ I don't think this is really a dichotomy where you have to choose one or the other. In Ferguson I think it was incredibly important to be up there, particularly as a largely white group, to take steps to dissolve the segregation and racial tension that exists in this city by acting in solidarity with others; also to make connections. Also many of us have never experienced this type of rebellion and I think it was important for people to get that sort of experience in the streets; to experience what it feels like to collectively struggle and fight back. I don't think that necessarily means that people shouldn't do other things too. When we were up there, we found ourselves rapidly outpaced by other rebels. So even if you believe in an anarchist vanguard, that wasn't a possibility because people were already so much more advanced than what most anarchists were prepared for. Also, due to certain racial tensions, those perceived as white outsiders needed to limit their ways of engaging, to follow rather than take initiative. It was such a tense environment that things could really go any direction in any moment, which felt really weird. At the same time it felt amazing to be up there with people struggling together. So I do think it was very important for us as anarchists to be participating in the heart of the uprising.

In addition though, as anarchists we have developed this set of specialized skills we've learned over the years as anarchists in the streets, and we should be thinking about how to use these skills in critical moments in different parts of the city that could have a big impact or help things to spread to another place. One of the cooler things that happened in a different place, involved all the gas and pepperspray supplies being shipped in. There was a distribution center in Minnesota where wildcat workers refused to ship any gas to Ferguson. Not that this is necessarily specific to anarchists, but it is interesting to note that there are key places where our enemies can sustain a critical blow by not getting the supplies or reinforcements they need in the streets. It can limit their capability to act. I think anarchists should be doing both, we should be in the streets and we should be thinking of ways to help the situation expand and last longer; to sabotage the attempts of the police to regain social peace; to imagine ways things can spread; to watch and study the city for other sparks that could be fueled; showing signs of disruption all over the city, even graffiti or small attacks – everything was noticed in those weeks.

*** It seems like some of the other things anarchists can do in these situations include encouraging people to wear masks, attacking surveillance systems, trying to undermine more sinister or subtle types of recuperation or leftist attempts to seize control. These things are almost constants that we should expect and have some strategic perspective around.

+++ I can say for sure that anarchists did create a culture – almost single handedly – of wearing masks. Where the first few nights people were openly saying "why would I wear a mask!? I'm proud of what I'm doing, I want people to know I'm doing this" while com-

mitting crazy felonies, later in the week it was almost a fashion statement to have a shirt tied around your head. I think another way anarchists helped to create a safer space for people to engage in more combative action was by attacking the media crews and pushing them out of the streets, or at least back towards police lines. Before this happened there would be dozens of film crews, taking footage of looters, many of whom had no masks on, or had visible tattoos.

*** It seems like there are potentials when these situations erupt – both in the epicenter and at the margins – for all sorts of people, including anarchists, to find some sort of individual self-realization and also to push their own projects further. In doing so they might also help to spread the social conflict and I think it is at the intersection of these possibilities that some of the most exciting things happen. It feels pretty clear that a lot of what we've talked about already has been in one way or another about identity and I think that its in these conflictual situations that we can actually understand how identity works against us. A basic contention that a lot of people coming out of struggles in the Bay Area, whether the Oscar Grant rebellion or the occupations, is the idea that identity is a tool of the state used to keep people apart and to enforce the social roles that people are expected to play. It also becomes clear that, in these moments of rupture, identities start to break apart and collapse. As a consequence, this is where the state tries to regain control first, through the logic of identity and through a reimposition of the identity categories that were previously falling apart. It seems, from your account and others, that this was also at play in Ferguson.

+++ *This is definitely true, and I think the state in the Bay has perfected the modern day use of Identity as a form of control, especially in situations like the Oscar Grant Rebellion. Having watched what happened there, it is really interesting to see the parallels, word for word, in how the state responded here. After the first night of rioting, almost instantly the Sheriff came out and said "this is a small group of white, anarchist, outside agitators that came in and stirred things up". To me it was obvious that this was an attempt to try and preemptively put a stop to any sort of racial unity. Historically, racializing situations has been one of the first measures the state takes to put down rebellions. Whether it was class rebellions against the state in the sixteen and seventeen hundreds or anti-police rebellions in the past decade. The term "outside agitator" was actually first used in the US in the 60's by a southern Sheriff to describe whites coming down to collaborate and struggle with blacks against segregation. Being in this uprising was the closest I've ever felt to people taking real steps to break apart their identities based on race, gender, class, anarchist, etc. Obviously these identities weren't actually gone, and there were still many dynamics at play based on them, but they started to weaken. And so that was one of the first things that the state (and the many micro-states, or anyone who sought to gain control of the situation) attempted to re-instate. It was visible when the police talked about 'white anarchists' and instantly some leftists groups picked up this same language. There was also a strong push by more 'radical' groups such as the Nation of Islam, and the New Black Panther Party, to racialize things. They were in the streets trying to push a line that this was a black issue, and it was a struggle for black power. Unlike the leftists and politicians, these groups were in the streets every night, but it was still obvious that their attempts to racialize things was only to gain control of a crowd and push their political agenda.*

*** It seems like gender was also a key factor. I've heard accounts of Al Sharpton and others calling for "strong black men" to step forward to help police the demonstrations, and for the young men participating in the riots to "grow up and be a man" by helping to end the rioting, or also calling for women to go home "to be with their children". It seems like gender was an obvious axis along with race that politicians used to try to put things down.

+++ *Yeah, it was actually really funny to see the back and forth of these same groups. The leftists who were trying to gain control would be out there talking about how all the rioters were young men and there weren't elderly people or women in an attempt to discredit the riots. Firstly, this just wasn't true, there were so many types of people out there fighting. Even funnier was that their response was to create things like Al Sharpton's 'disciples of justice' who were 100 black men that he called on to control things. They were really pushing these gender roles that women needed to go home or fall to the back, "there are women and children out here, its dangerous" or one night the Nation of Islam was out there saying "take your women home!" When you step back and look at the situation its apparent that the people discrediting the riots for being largely men in their 20's were either the same parties or working with the same parties who were trying to push women and children off the streets at night, trying to stop the fighting in the name of defending the "women, children and elderly" that were in the streets. But the thing is, in the streets at night, when it was conflictual, people just weren't taking it. Any time people were trying to racialize things or enforce strict gender roles that men should be the combatants and women should go home, people would actively refuse it, shout at them, tell them to go home, say "fuck you, this is our struggle".*

*** There's a really subtle way, that is also very intentional, where we can see in the Bay and in Ferguson, where the state, the media, the leftists, the police, are all pushing the same line. It is an attempt to take this crazy racialized violence, this day to day campaign of extermination against primarily young black men, and to turn it into this limited "issue" about a few racist cops or the need for a handful of small reforms to policing or prosecution. In doing so they mystify the fact that race isn't an 'issue' but that race and racial violence is the foundation of …

+++ *American society!*

*** Yeah, all the misery that is inflicted on people here.

+++ *Yeah, it makes sense why they immediately try to reduce things to an issue. Because these rebellions and moments like this really break open the potential for what can happen. People were talking about how this isn't an issue, it isn't just about Ferguson, it isn't a black and white thing. Its a people versus the blue, its a systemic thing. This is way past an issue, it was a breaking point. This wasn't just an antipolice riot, it was an insurrection against dominant society, against the way things exist, against class, against white supremacy. It was no longer just about a bad cop, or justice. What people want is freedom, and up there we were starting to figure out how to take steps to get that. And this is terrifying to the leftists and the politicians and anyone with any sort of comfort in this world that they might lose. So it makes sense that these groups would join forces in order to calm things down and restore peace. The left talks about taking steps toward reform and all this bullshit, but people could see through it, that it was an attempt to push them back into the same 'ole cages they always are in.*

*** With that, another way of thinking about the question is the look at the question of anarchist identity. And that in the same way that the gendered and racial barriers that keep us apart and prevent us from acting in certain ways, the anarchist identity also dissolves in these moments. On the one hand you have all sorts of people, anarchists or not, spreading anarchic activities, arson, looting. And then on the other hand you have all sorts of people who weren't anarchists being called such by the media. So for those of us who are anarchists and choose to participate in these struggles, it almost stops mattering who is an anarchist and who isn't. Or maybe it matters to us, but in the broader sense doesn't.

+++ *Ideally I'd like to think that the anarchist identity would also dissolve in a situation like this. When there's an uprising it makes sense to lose ones identity; Not to lose ones' ethics or ideas or desires or the tensions one holds with the world from an anarchist perspective, but to lose the way that any identity can be used against us. We saw this play out when the state labelled people as anarchists and tried to use that to separate militants out in the street. I think its important to let go of these identities and let go of any social baggage we have from participating in an anarchist scene, for better or worse. One thing that I can think of, and by no means do I intend to talk shit, but I can remember during the London riots, a situation where the whole country is burning, the FAI claimed responsibility for an attack against two or three cars. And while I highly respect the attack and the individuals who risked their safety to carry this out, it doesn't make sense in my mind to isolate oneself and set oneself apart in that way. We should be acting, but we shouldn't be acting in order to separate ourselves from people. So yeah, I think it was important for the anarchist identity to dissolve alongside all other identities.*

*** In a certain sense, moments like these are clarifying in terms of why we fight and why we do what we do. I'd say that for anarchists, especially those of us who desire insurrection, what is at stake is not a fight to affirm an anarchist identity or ideology, but to actually fight for anarchy.

+++ *Definitely*

*** The final thoughts and questions I have are about whats to come in the coming months and whats to happen now. The space that was created in Ferguson is gone but the tensions that led to this revolt still exist. And the thousands of people who participated in this revolt carry with them their experiences and the self-transformations they went through. All that continues, and so it seems intuitive that things will continue also. It is just a matter of how we can make things spread and also how those of us not in Ferguson can express our solidarity when it is needed.

+++ *Firstly, I just don't know. The city feels like it will never be the same after this uprising. Things feel different and the tensions are still there. In ways it feels like a steam cap was blown and a little bit of anger was released over the twelve days of rioting. It is hard to connect with people because of how spread out and alienated the city is, but I think its important to keep showing signals of disorder, having visible attacks and signs of resistance. Also the Left is finally starting to get a foothold and organize these large days of action. These are totally recuperative, but at the same time there are still large groups of people who refuse to be controlled by these politicians and activists, and so it makes sense to engage in them. Whether simply to disrupt or push them in different directions. I also think it makes sense to act in conjunction but outside of these events. We are at a very crucial moment, where everything is being noticed, and that gives us a situation where, as anarchists, we might be able to introduce new analysis, new tactics and hopefully spread things into new terrains, both literally and figuratively. As for what anarchists elsewhere can be doing... while I think solidarity attacks are always impressive and wouldn't discourage them, I think that on a broader sense only anarchists see them. This isn't necessarily a bad thing, it gives us warmth and strength to see others attacking, but I think it makes sense for rebels to think about how things might spread and how they can act in ways that inspire rebellion in their own places. If not also acting in ways that could impact or deter the efforts of police in Ferguson. So I'm not entirely sure how this can look, but I know people are creative.*



The struggle for Kobane: an example of selective solidarity

October 2014 - Syria

The heroic resistance of the people of Kobane in fighting the onslaught of the Daesh (ISIS) fascists since mid-September, has led to a surge of international solidarity. A multitude of articles and statements have been written and protests have been held in cities across the world. Kurds have flooded across the Turkish border to help their compatriots in the fight despite being brutally pushed back by Turkish forces, and others including Turkish comrades from DAF (Revolutionary Anarchist Action) have gone to the border to support in keeping it open to help the flood of refugees escaping to Turkey. There have been calls to arm Kurdish forces and calls to support DAF and send aid for refugees. Yet this solidarity with Syria's Kurds has not been extended to non-Kurdish groups in the country that have been fighting, and dying, to rid themselves of fascism and violent repression and for freedom and self-determination. It's often said incorrectly, that sectarianism lies at the heart of the Syrian conflict. It's necessary to understand to what extent sectarianism plays a role in our response too.

The protest movement that erupted against Bashar Al Assad in 2011 united people across Syria's diverse ethnic and religious spectrum in a common struggle for freedom. Kobane was no exception. The Kurds who are the majority in the town had long suffered under the Arabization policies of the Baathist regime, and were amongst the first to rise up when the Syrian revolution began. In this protest from mid-2012 Kurds and Arabs in Kobane jointly called for the downfall of the regime and chanted in support of the Free Syrian Army, raising the Kurdish flag at a time when this was a dangerous act of defiance. But from its earliest days the Syrian protest movement in Kobane and elsewhere failed to gain international support. Had it done so the country would not have been destroyed to such a degree that ISIS could have taken control of large areas.

Over the past three years, relations between Syria's Arabs and Kurds have been fragile and changeable, subject to both the Assad regime's manipulation of ethnic divisions, and to the misguided political machinations of opposition politicians from both groups who have put their own interests and agendas above the people's vision of freedom. Yet, in spite of this activists on the ground have continued to stress the importance of Kurd-

ish-Arab popular unity and to resist ethnic and sectarian divisions. Few international solidarity statements have mirrored these calls.

The absence of Sunni Arabs from narratives of the struggle against Daesh is notable. Few articles have mentioned that fighters from Free Syrian Army (FSA) battalions are also risking their lives to join their Kurdish compatriots in defending Kobane from religious extremists or that recent weeks have seen greater coordination between Kurdish and Arab military formations. On 10 September 2014, local FSA brigades joined forces with the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) to create a joint operation to fight Daesh called Burkan Al Firat (Euphrates Volcano). The battalions involved include Liwa Thuwar Al Raqqa (Raqqa Revolutionary Brigade), Shams Al Shamal, Al-Tawhid (East), Saraya Jarablus and other smaller groups. This strategic alliance not only strengthens Kurdish-Arab unity at this critical time but also brings valuable experience to the Kobane resistance as the FSA has been fighting Daesh since the beginning of this year. In a 19 October statement the PYD affirmed that "This resistance shown by our units YPG and the factions of the free Syrian army is a guarantee for defeating ISIS terrorism in the region. Counter-terrorism and building a free and democratic Syria was the basis for the agreements signed with factions of the free Syrian Army. As we can see that the success of the revolution are subject to the development of this relationship between all factions and the forces of good in this country." (*sic*)

Like their Kurdish compatriots, Free Syrian Army battalions have been resisting Daesh in Kobane with greatly inferior weapons. Whilst Daesh possesses the heavy US weaponry it seized in Iraq, Syrian fighters (both Kurds and Arabs) have only light arms and limited ammunition. Both the YPG and the FSA have been calling on the international community to supply them with heavy weaponry. Supporting the call for weapons to the resistance is imperative to allow the people of the region to defend themselves from annihilation. It also reduces the perceived need for direct military intervention from external powers which operate according to their own agendas, ones diametrically opposed to the interests of the popular struggle.* In supporting such calls we should distinguish between 1) support for a broad coalition of local forces against fascism and for a popular struggle which seeks to destroy as much of the old regime as possible, as well as supporting the right of self-defence of *all* people against mass slaughter (including their right to take arms from wherever they are offered as necessity demands), and 2) support for any political project or group claiming power in the post-revolutionary phase which will necessarily reverse the achievements of the revolution. The later must be resisted.

Much of the international solidarity for the Kurdish struggle stems from support for Rojava's inspiring social revolution. Kurdish majority areas of Afrin, Jazira and Kobane were able to establish the Autonomous Region following the withdrawal of Assad's forces in July 2012. A Social Contract was developed which stresses the desire to "build a society free from authoritarianism, militarism, centralism and the intervention of religious authority in public affairs". It affirms the principle of local self-government for all cantons of the region where governing councils and public institutions would be established through direct elections in a decentralized confederation. The charter enshrines unity and coexistence amongst the regions diverse ethnic and religious groups, a respect for human rights and an end to gender discrimination, and affirms people's right to self determination. In a radical reorganization of society towards democratic confederalism the people of Rojava have established councils and communes throughout Western Kurdistan to self-manage their communities in areas such as health, education and trade and address the issues facing society. This provides a powerful example of alternative forms of social organization as a counterpoint to centralized, authoritarian control. Whilst such developments in radical democracy are a beacon of light in what's fast becoming a region of darkness, anti-authoritarians should not romanticize the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD). Talking about the establishment of the Autonomous Region, Syrian-Kurdish anarchist Shiar Neyo states:

"*From the PYD's point of view, this was a golden opportunity to impose its authority and expand its sphere of influence in the Kurdish areas in Syria. This political pragmatism and thirst for power are two important factors in understanding the party's dealings with the regime, the revolution, the FSA, and even the Kurds themselves. They also help explain many phenomena that seem to bewilder some commentators and analysts, such as the suppression by PYD forces of independent activists and those critical of the party's policies, in much the same vein as the Baathist regime did. By way of example, one can cite in this regard the Amuda massacre in July 2013, in which the People's Protection Units (YPG) opened fire on unarmed demonstrators, or the closure of the new independent radio station Arta in February 2014, under the pretext that it was not 'licensed'. The PYD's forces have also assaulted members of other Kurdish political parties and arrested some of them under a variety of excuses; they have been controlling food and financial resources in the Kurdish areas and distributing them in an unjust manner on the basis of partisan favouritism, and so on and so forth. Such practices remind people, rightly, of the oppressive practices of the Assad regime.*"

An obvious tension therefore exists between the authoritarianism of the old guard of the PYD which maintains a top down vision, and the thousands of Kurds who believe in, and are trying to realize, radical democracy from below and should be supported in that aim. But the Kurdish region of Syria is not the only place where a social revolution is putting into place radically new ways of organizing, although it has benefited from greater space and stability, relatively speaking when compared with other areas of the country. Experiments in local,

autonomous, self organization have been a defining feature of the Syrian revolution, and hundreds of local committees and local councils have been established to administer basic services and coordinate revolutionary activities. Yet these people are not seen to be deserving of international solidarity because they have no leader who has converted to libertarian municipalism. The fact simply is that they have no leader at all and these forms of horizontal organization arose spontaneously from below as a response to the destruction of the State.

Furthermore, as the world's attention focuses on Kobane, struggles elsewhere have failed to gain the media spotlight. In August, the people of Deir Al Zour, mainly from Al-Sheitat tribe, led a brave resistance against Daesh. In the following days, facing the fascists alone, the resistance was almost defeated and some 700 people from the al-Sheitat tribe were executed by Daesh causing little global outrage. But the people of Deir Al Zour didn't abandon their struggle against the ISIS extremists. In recent weeks the White Shroud (Kufn Al Abyaad) has killed some 100 Daesh fighters through guerrilla style attacks. This secretive popular resistance group is made up of around 300 locals, the majority of whom have never fought before but have taken up what arms they can raise to protect their families and communities from fascist onslaught.

As the world focuses on Daesh's advances in northern Syria, communities elsewhere are continuing to resist the genocidal maniac Bashar Al Assad and his sectarian militias which have increased their assault on liberated areas since US airstrikes freed up the regime's resources elsewhere. There's been little solidarity shown with the people of Al Waer district of Homs, the last rebel stronghold in a city which was once the soul of the revolution. Al Waer is home to some 400,000 people, half of them displaced civilians who have fled conflict elsewhere in the country. The area has been under regime siege for months and in the past couple of weeks the Assad regime has intensified its shelling causing a massive humanitarian crisis. Syrian activists' calls for solidarity with Al Waer have fallen on deaf ears.

The question that remains is whether international solidarity for Kobane arises from the Kurdish ethnicity of its defenders (i.e. they're not Sunni Arabs), from support for the political position of a party (the PYD/PKK), or from the principle that all people have the right to defend themselves from terror, whether in the form of religious or nationalist fascism and to determine for themselves how to organize their lives and communities. If it arises from the latter principle, then the same solidarity extended to the Kurds must be extended to all revolutionary Syrians.

Leila Al Shami

* Note: we don't see how "calling on the international community to supply them [the resistance] with heavy weaponry" would not be an indirect "military intervention from external powers which operate according to their own agendas, ones diametrically opposed to the interests of the popular struggle".



NOTES ON AN ONGOING DEBATE ON ANONYMITY

Aversión - June 2014 - Spain

Recently a debate emerged on international level about the question of acronyms, signatures, paternity, claims etc., in sum, about the identification and the anonymity in anarchist and anti-authoritarian struggles.

On the occasion of a call for an anarchist gathering which took place in Zurich in Swiss in November 2012, and under the form of a preliminary contribution, some comrades imprisoned in Greece wrote a text of which a large part is dedicated to the question of why using an acronym, an identity, a well defined name.

Shortly after, a text was published under the title "*Anonymity*" as an answer and with the purpose of generating a debate about the question. Obviously, the text wasn't signed, and it takes on different points. It was first published on the website of Indymedia Athens and then translated and spread in different languages. This text wanted to be a continuation of a debate that has been some many times put off. The critique of the text by the Greek comrades was just an incitation as to ensure that the question would be debated, everywhere around the globe, by the comrades who deem it necessary: "*Since they have argued for their choices, something that for many years other anarchists who shared their path have not considered appropriate to do, thus making any debate on the question impossible, and having sent their text to an anarchist encounter, it is clear that their intention is to finally open a discussion on these themes. Happy with their decision, we intend here to give our contribution.*"

Shortly after, some answers tried to close off the debate, other counter-answers, in different languages, tried to continue it. These notes will try to sketch the central points of this debate.

How could we discuss this question in a local context, that of the Iberian Peninsula, without that it would seem a faraway debate? It is easy, it is enough to take some current and local repressive examples. Recently, several comrades have been arrested in different circumstances, but all accused of belonging to organisations or to acronyms. For example, on different places of the province of Barcelona, five anarchists were arrested in May 2013, accused of apology of terrorism and membership of a supposed collective "*Black Flag*" which probably was just a Facebook profile. They were released after several months of preventive detention in the FIES-regime. Later on, in November 2013, in the city of Barcelona, five comrades have been arrested and accused of several things, among which belonging to the FAI/FRI and to the GAC [*Grupos Anarquistas Coordinados*]. These first acronyms are already known by everyone, the European Union declared it illegal some years ago; the other is the acronym of an anarchist coordination on national level which does not have any link, not in its intentions, nor in its use, to the first acronyms, but in which the police and the juridical and media rot have found a succulent candy. Two comrades, Mónica and Francisco, are still in preventive detention for these accusations.

Two months later, this time in Galicia and in Ciudad Real, three comrades are arrested and accused of belonging to the ADAI [*Acción Directa Anticapitalista Internacionalista*], an acronym which would have claimed an arson attack against a managerial circle in Vigo in December 2012. After several days they are released.

In this debate, two interesting points are put forward, suited for further deepening.

Firstly, the possibility of maintaining anonymity, not so much for a matter of security or a conscious intention to not "get a place in the pages of history" – because, in the end, the one who signs his actions wants in one way or another be recognised, whatever his motive might be – but because if we really think that revolt and the necessity of subversion is property of no one, and even less of a group or an organisation, front or federation, and if we think that they are no hierarchies and that everything should be reproducible, then why create more obstacles for this? If an action, whatever it might be, is not signed, it is because it belongs to nobody. If this action is part of a concrete context – for example, an ongoing struggle – there is even less reason to sign it, since the action belongs to the struggle itself, to everyone who share this struggle.

Secondly, now yes, comes the repressive question. As we outlined through the preceding examples (which are not the first ones), Power tries to use acronyms as to justify the existence of an "organisation" and in this way be able to apply the legal arsenal of the *antiterrorism*. For those who do not know it: the accusation of terrorism automatically hardens the detention conditions (with days of isolation and non-communication during which nobody knows anything about the imprisoned) and endorses torture, as well as particular measures of pre-trail detention like the FIES-regime, dispersion of the prisoners, etc. All this against people who are accused and in pre-trail detention, since the simple police accusation puts the whole machinery into work.

The text "*Anonymity*", which, like we said, started this attempt to debate, notes that "These Greek comrades completely neglect to consider a few repressive mechanisms, like for example the use of associative crime, that paradoxically and unintentionally they have seen facilitated by their enthusiasm for identity. To clarify what we mean, we'll give two concrete historical examples. In Spain, in the final decades of the 1800s, there was much social agitation. In lower Andalusia, in particular, setting fire to vineyards and crops, the illegal cutting of wood, cattle theft, and even murder multiplied. Unlike Catalan anarchism, at that time closer to a legalist position, Andalusian anarchists maintained a certain inclination for direct action. In this scenario, in 1883, the "Mano Negra," the mythical anarchist organization to which the authorities attributed a plot aiming to kill all the land owners of the region. If it is true that it aroused the sympathy of many Andalusian anarchists, it is also true that the very existence of this organization is still in doubt. For example, the authors of *The Millennarian Fire*, the French Cangaceiros Delhoysie and Lapierre, wrote: "It is still probable that a group or a sect with the name Mano Negra never existed; this name served to point out an ensemble of actions and nameless sects. In total, the whole set of trials instituted against Andalusian anarchists in the sphere of Mano Negra would end up with 300 prison sentences." Beyond doubt, whether this "signature" was a pure police invention or an effective choice by some Andalusian comrades, it is nonetheless certain that it, on the one hand, consolidated all the nameless actions carried out in that period, and, on the other hand, was of use to the judicial system for handing out the highest penalties to whoever had taken part in the various social struggles of that period (beyond justifying many summary executions at the expense of subversives). The authors of numberless small actions were therefore hunted down and condemned because they were accused of taking part in an armed gang of which they had never been a part (and that perhaps had never even existed).

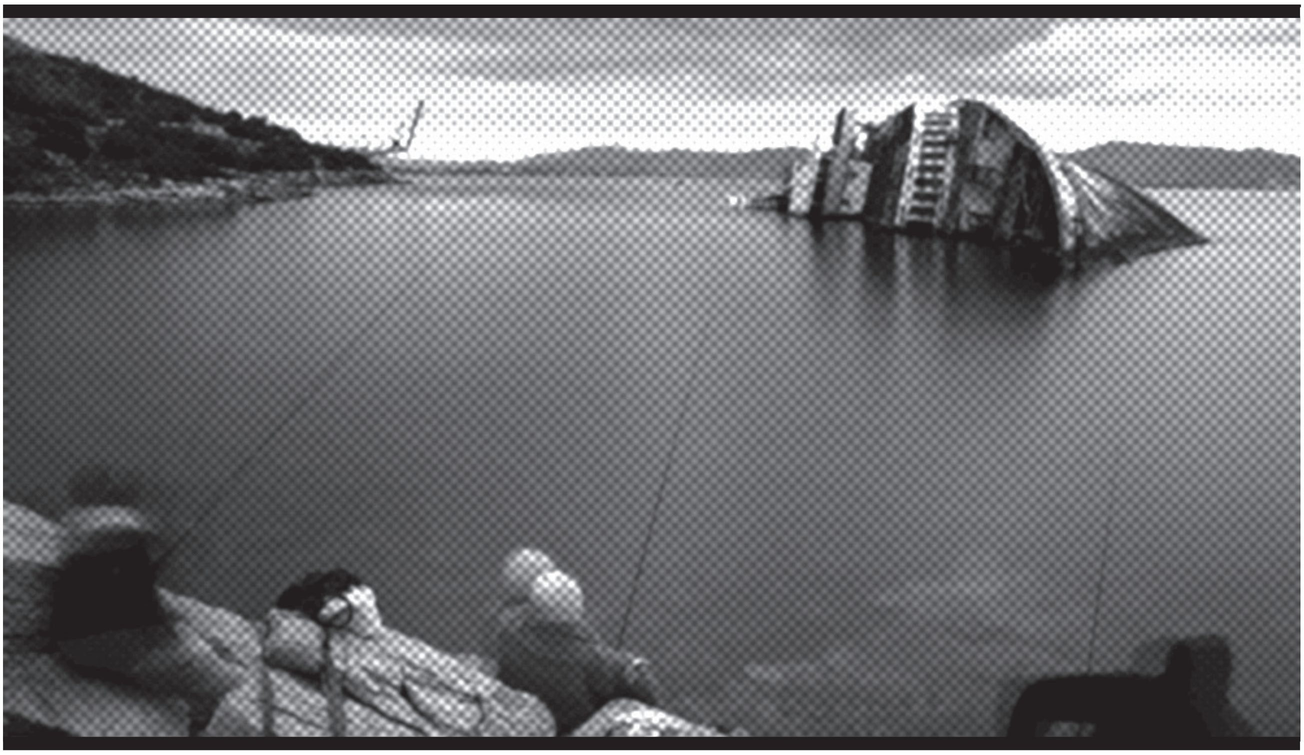
A few decades later, in France, an analogous event was produced. The actions carried out by a few individualist comrades were attributed to a "Bonnot gang" that was born only in the imagination of a journalist. In reality there was not a structured gang, only an environment of active and volatile comrades. Single individuals met, associated for action, left, without any homogeneity. But the spectre of an "organized group" was stirred up by the magistrature and used to incriminate dozens of comrades for associative crimes that foresaw the greatest penalties, which would have been impossible to prepare for without the creation of that organizational, collective phantom.

Whether in the social movement or an "area" of the specific movement, in both of these cases, small actions carried out be individual comrades, expressions of that dark forest that is anarchy, got swallowed up by an Organization, by a Group, real or virtual as it may be. The state has every interest in this happening. On the one hand, it can spread the idea that there are only a few hot heads fighting it, that every insurrectional endeavour is only the plot of a very few subversives against the will of very many citizens who consent to the state, thus depriving subversion of its social and generalizable character. On the other hand, it can use the heavy hand against its enemies, increasing sentences by using associative crime laws."

Regarding the often spread reference that in other movements, like the one for animal liberation, acronyms, as is the case for the acronym-umbrella ALF (*Animal Liberation Front*) have functioned as propellers on a global level, the comrades remind us that this is "*because the actions carried out around the world by its activists resembled each other, dealing for the most part with animal liberation.*" The difference is that the anarchist practices are not limited to one type of action in particular, and that everything which tries to limit it is contrary to its own principles (autonomy, self-organisation, etc.). Despite the fact the Greeks comrades are pretending the opposite, it is unavoidable that the use of certain acro-

nyms create a hierarchy of means and types of action. Then, new divisions arise which can only weaken us. There are those who know how to do difficult thing, the *hard ones*, the *committed ones*. And then there is the rest, those who dedicate themselves to the *dirty work* which doesn't fit into any kind of acronym (far beyond the one of the syndicate), like propaganda, demonstrations etc. Therefore we think that anonymity gives strength, we see it as the possibility for actions within reach of any person, anarchist or not, of all those who think they are useful, necessary, judicious.

"Anonymity eliminates the right of possession of the author over what he has done; it depersonalizes the action, freeing it from the human particularity who committed it. In this way it allows the action to potentially become the plural act […] The anonymous action has no proprietors, no masters, it belongs to no one. *This means that it belongs to all those who share it.*"



About the ongoing debate in Greece on the matter of informal organisation

2013 - Greece

Some short but substantial observations starting from the call "For an anarchist political organization", signed by "Circle of Fire", anarchist collective "In the streets" and "Anarchists for social liberation".

Having read this text and considering to have sufficiently understood the general frame and the particular aspects to which the comrades who sing this initiative refer, we can make some preliminary remarks on the following points:

1. The comrades are labouring the point in the sense that on this moment, at least according to us, the crushing majority of anarchist individualities and collectives in Greece agree with the almost totality of the assessments and reflections exposed in big lines concerning the so-called organisational question of the anarchist movement.

2. According to us, if we start from the assumption that their assessments and their will are today to a big extent shared by us all, we should go beyond this starting point and take the following step, the one that goes beyond mere assessments.

3. And exactly there lies the practical difficulty of the organisational question, independently from our personal evaluations on the question if the objective and subjective conditions are today favourable to us, as states the text. We could accept the hypothesis of the so-called traditional organizational conception of the anarchists, that is to say, that they want to "organize themselves based on their ideal", but on the condition to be aware of the fact that the only way to cover this distance – between the current conditions until the social revolution – is to rely on a methodology.

4. From the moment that we agree with the reasoning exposed above, one should also admit that anarchism or anarchy in its totality as a dynamic social movement in the current conditions is today of few value as an ideology, like its history inside of the political and social movements of the class of the exploited, of its victories and defeats, of its successes and its errors shows. Naturally, one should take all this into consideration to come to pertinent conclusions. In the current conditions which are being modified at a high pace, we think that it is even more the anarchist method which has and could take on more importance and practical value, since this organizational methodological proposal does not only

concern the anarchists (which is easy to demonstrate), but also the more vast movement of the exploited, inside of the social struggles taking place today and which will take place tomorrow. It is evident that without the active participation of the majority of the exploited the social revolution becomes practically and theoretically impossible. A consequence follows out if this in an urgent way: the organizational question of the next insurrection. According to us, the final conclusion is that we choose to organize ourselves today based on our ideal, using the anarchist method as a path to cover the distance of which we spoke.
It is with the anarchist organizational methodological proposal that we fight in practice inside of the more vast movement of the class of the exploited during social struggles. It is, according to us, only this method that could guarantee the conjunction between the means we use on an organizational level today and the goal we are trying to achieve on a strategic level.

5. If we lean on this reasoning about the method that is according to us of capital importance concerning the completion of our path towards our strategic goal – the social revolution –, all discussion and reflection about the organizational question then disposes of a solid compass, allowing us to avoid getting lost and to reach in the end our destination. We will not succumb to the temptation, neither fall into the error, to make reference here to the organizational forms that the anarchist movement has deployed on an international level during its long journey inside of the class struggle. Research concerning this point has been done in a certain way, also inside of the Greek anarchist movement. The comrades who studied this subject and reflected on the matter have made their conclusions, but the fact that they would be pertinent or not, has no importance at all at this point of the reasoning. One only thing matters concerning what we are discussing here, that is to say, the proposal of the organizational form in relation to the applied method: what is important is to know if this form is taking on a centralised as well as democratic character, a probability that, at least on a theoretical level, should be difficult if not impossible, since it is coming from anarchists.

6. To our surprise – even if such a phenomenon historically already appeared in the anarchist journey and beyond the shared assessment which labours the point for the reasons explained above – we see that the general position of the comrades who carry this organizational proposal is visibly of a centralist character. It is not necessary to insist further on this point, because we believe that any comrade or collective of anarchists is capable of making their own conclusions. But they could ask themselves also if this is something new or only the return of recycled old stuff on a critical moment. The problem with any form of organizational centralism, even if it pretends to be anarchist, is that it is proposed in the name of a supposed efficiency that we from our side are incapable of conceiving. From the point of view of the anarchist methodology, the centralist organizational form is not only inacceptable and dangerous, and should therefore already on this ground be rejected, but covers also an even more dazzling problem: that of the quantitative illusion and the belief that "by becoming more numerous inside of an anarchist organization, we will have more possibilities to win." With time passing by and in the case of a growth of the structure, this centralism leads unavoidably to a spectacular and apparent efficiency of the organization, but in substance, to a formalist sclerosis of the totality of the functions and processes of the organization, and thus to some sort of informal power of specialists who, in this case, are anarchists. Despite the fact that it is about an anarchist organization, we are finding ourselves in front of similar functioning as the one of parties.

7. On the other hand, the practical application of the anarchist method inside of the specific organization, or if one prefers, of the "anarchist political organization", has as a consequence a complete decentralisation which we will qualify as informal. In our opinion, the informal decentralisation should be the guarantee to avoid all formalism and all organizational bureaucratism in the functioning of the organization. This doesn't mean that the comrades would be better persons than the others for the simple reason that they would posses some sort of "ideological purity", but for the reason that on a theoretical and practical level, the anarchists would be the only ones capable of applying this method. The anarchist method opposes itself clearly to the political (centralist) method, be it inside of the specific anarchist organization or inside of the mass organization during social struggles. It is precisely at this point that resides, according to us, the principal weapon and notable advantage that anarchists have always had in their hands to oppose to the politics of the authoritarians. Only the application of the anarchist method in the social struggles has the capacity, by destroying, to sweep away every political utopia and to open at the same time the gates of the social revolution, since it is the only method that on an organizational level has the possibility to arrive to the convergence between the means that are used and our strategic goal.

8. Everything that has been said up until now concerning the polemic about the organizational question inside of the anarchist movement in Greece but also on an international level, doesn't mean at all, according to us, that the capital question has been solved, especially as in the course of the last thirty years, the theoretical and practical problems have been limited to simple assessments and have not been treated in an in-depth way inside of the anarchist movement. The reasons for this are numerous, and it is impossible to sum them all up now. To facilitate the discussion, we will make reference to two important moments concerning the history and the period in which this polemic appeared in Greece. It is about recalling the memories of the older ones as about learning some lessons from it for the younger comrades.

Concerning the centralist model of anarchist organization of synthesis, a crucial moment was 1987 when the proposal for the constitution of a Union of Anarchists was launched. This proposal was rejected by the majority of the anarchist movement. Concerning the decentralised model of the informal anarchist organization, it was in 2000 that this matter was put on the table, but it didn't encounter the consent of most of the organized groups of the movement at that time. We add to this the fact that this last proposal, in the case that it would have been pursued, also had an internationalist dimension [this makes reference to the project of an insurrectionalist anti-authoritarian International].

9. If the anarchist movement in Greece has without any doubt, because of certain historical characteristics, a rather informal structure on the inside as well as in its relation to the more vast movement of the exploited, we want to underline that this doesn't mean that the whole of the movement has thought enough about the organizational and methodological bases of informality. This is also due to the fact that this proposal, even if it was publicly launched, was rejected as we said and therefore hasn't had any methodological continuation since the year 2000.

10. Having said this, we reckon that you have to be of great political naivety, as not to say more, to qualify the insurrectional and informal anarchism with terms like "spontaneism", "inconsequent and lack of compromise", "conscious or unconscious absence of a collective development of the movement", "lack of political criteria", "incapacity to conceive the revolutionary question in a social approach", "limitation to simple opposition and denunciation" and finally "impossibility to trace strategic perspectives, to structure and organize the struggle on the long term", as do the carriers of the proposal "for an anarchist political organization".
Things would be tragic if everything that we just mentioned and which is reproached to the informal insurrectional anarchist model would in their totality not be something else than a demonstration of political lightness and naivety, a sign of the dose of ignorance of those who express this position. In that case, things would obviously not be tragic for the informal and insurrectional model, that today only few comrades in Greece take into consideration, but would be tragic for the whole of the anarchist movement. That movement would then not have been able to do anything until today, having made the error of taking seriously the informal model according to the definition of the carriers of the text "for an anarchist political organization".

11. Finally, and since for our part we also draw as well from the history as from the tradition of the anarchist movement, comes back to us that old anarchist principle – based on the analyses and premonitions of Max Stirner – concerning the opposition between individualism and communism. That is a phenomenal matter that leads to a false problem: that of an opposition between the individual and the collective, because in reality such opposition does not exist. This fundamental principal is only valid in an anarchist methodological approach of the social fact. It is of course not present in a liberal analytical approach, which quite logically reproduces the schizophrenia in which the individual or the community find themselves, both being dispossessed of their identity by the institutional action of State and capital.
Our passion for the anarchist tradition brings us moreover to a second principle in relation to the discussion about the organizational problem. It is not possible today to engage in a serious perspective of debate without taking into account on an egalitarian basis as well the participation of groups as of individuals. Any deviation from this egalitarian principle is digging our own grave. On a moment where the party of Marxism, if not already definitively dead, is agonizing, it is unthinkable that the anarchists try to make its phantom re-enter through the back door.

Anarchists for the informal and insurrectional organization.



Liberating Journeys of Attack

October 2014 - Greece

The following text is intended to be the continuation of a dialogue on the tools of anarchist insurgency and the ways of organizing ourselves; a dialogue that was initiated at an international anarchist encounter somewhere in the countryside of France and now continues from a prison cell in Greece.

The opinions expressed here are my own personal views, so it should be clear that they promote a particular position on the issue. However it is not desired to have one position prevail over all the others; what matters is how the various different, yet complementary, points of view communicate and interact with each other. In the face of an enemy that's very flexible as regards the use and multitude of means and forms of attack, the diversity of considerations and practices on the part of anarchists is self-evident. Whichever different perspectives cannot be promoted dogmatically but rather based on a rationale of multifaceted attack.

First we need to talk about the very concept of organization, a word quite misunderstood in anarchist circles.

We face an enemy with complex and complicated functions. One of the main characteristics that make the enemy powerful is the constant evolution and organization of the social paranoia we are experiencing today: a technological, military, architectural, civil, industrial, economic, scientific organization. Every aspect of this world is being organized, constantly correcting its imperfections through an intelligent system which has a great number of servants.

In the face of this condition, whoever believes that one is able to fight without organization is naive to say the least.

"*In 1972, the pigs mobilized 150,000 men to hunt the RAF, using television to involve the people in the manhunt, having the Federal Chancellor intervene, and centralizing all police forces in the hands of the BKA; this makes it clear that, already at that point, a numerically insignificant group of revolutionaries was all it took to set in motion all of the material and human resources of the State; it was already clear that the State's monopoly of violence had material limits, that their forces could be exhausted, that if, on the tactical level, imperialism is a beast that devours humans, on the strategic level it is a paper tiger. It was clear that it is up to us whether the oppression continues, and it is also up to us to smash it.*" (Ulrike Meinhof)

We can thus say that whoever does not organize himself/herself will turn into a harmless aggregation that will be assimilated to the alienation mechanisms of the existent sooner or later. They will lose the combative attributes that make them dangerous for the enemy and subsequently be deported from the field of antagonistic battle.

Conversely, whoever has decided to fight this system will need to organize their hatred, in order to become effective and dangerous. So, the discussion about ways of organizing ourselves, having attributes inherent in our anarchist values, begins somewhere at this point.

The dilemma then is whether we will organize ourselves through a central anarchist organization that will be the reference point for the anarchist movement, or in a decentralized and diffuse manner through anarchist affinity groups that will maintain their political autonomy both in terms of action and collective decisions.

As regards the centralizing mode of organization I will speak in general, instead of specific, terms about who, and how, have opted for it in Greece.

If you look at it historically, these two forms of organization have always existed but never coexisted. In the Spanish civil war, anarchists were organized at the central level to combat the fascists, and the same thing happened during other revolutionary attempts.

The same is the case with most urban guerilla warfare organizations in the past decades that approached new comrades in the context of a particular political project, thus aiming to strengthen the organization instead of an armed diffusion, where the autonomy of each individuality opens up the possibility of creating chaotic fronts of attack.

This understanding of organizational ways should not be viewed separately from the social and political conditions of the time.

The combatants of those times studied their adversary with their own analytical tools, fought for freedom and paid the price with murders, harsh prison sentences, tortures, solitary confinement wards. Those among them who haven't renounced their values make their own critical assessment of the experiences acquired through the years, experiences which obviously deserve careful study; but if we cling to that we are doomed. What matters is what we're doing today, in the era we live in.

So, for me, the central organization and the revolutionary centralism are ghosts we need to banish from us.

Besides, an indication of this is the fact that all the remaining central anarchist organizations have simply kept the glorious hallmarks of those times, having sunk deep into reformism while they renounce direct action and rebellion in everyday life, and have nothing to do with something pertaining to combativeness. They refuse to understand the enormous changes at the social and political level, they refuse to talk about the edges of contemporary oppression, the advancement of science, the technological fascistization, the domination of multinationals, and merely trot ideologized theories about the conflict between capital and labour out, using terms that were written one hundred years ago, in another era of capitalism.

Worse still, they refuse to act, unable to understand that if they lived in the glorious past they reminisce about they would only be extras because they would never take any risks.

Now, as regards the revolutionary centralism within urban guerilla groups, even though I understand the causes and effects behind such a choice, I disagree with that because I believe that our goal is not to walk all together according to a common political project-program but rather to diffuse our means and urge everyone to safeguard their autonomy, thus contributing to the creation of new perceptions and possibilities for the intensification of polymorphous anarchist action.

This is why I opt for the informal organization, which I consider more qualitative and effective for reasons I will explain later. The basic component that gives tangibility to the informal organization (and not only) is nothing other than direct action; otherwise, we would be just a bunch of charlatans with dissident rhetoric.

The most important thing for an anarchist is deciding to undertake action because, in this way, the individuality breaks through the fear inflicted by domination regarding the choice of revolutionary action; when you take action, you overcome inhibitory factors that lead you to inactivity, you take your life in both hands and acquire the ability to affect to a greater or lesser extent the circumstances that define your life. Undertaking action is the equivalent of reclaiming our life that was stolen from us, thus shaping the characteristics of a free human who fights to get rid of their shackles, their social commitments, on a daily basis, abolishing the authoritarian roles imposed on them and building a culture that gestates the quality of a new life, the life of an anarchist insurgent who inflicts open wounds from razors on the contemporary world.

After having made such a decision, comes experimentation. Anarchists shouldn't have fixed positions; they're constantly on the move because, without moving, they are driven to self-destruction by ideological dogmatism. They reconsider things, criticize themselves, and explore the collective experience to adapt it to the current historical data. They put their hearts on ice to withstand pain, and set fire to what's left to wipe out the traces of their past "quiet" life. From this point forward, what counts is the struggle, but also vengeance, because whoever felt violence firsthand and did not seek revenge are worthy of their sufferings.

Let's go back to the issue of practical experimentation, that is, action with many ways, many methods and many forms.

I believe that the organization of our destructive desires should be expressed through Action Networks of high distinctiveness, where everyone will be able to read one's own words and works, get inspired, reflect, and act alongside us or fight against us. Being (communicatively) visible is part of our purpose to bring about the maximum degree of social polarization in order to clarify everyone's role in the authoritarian edifice, and then pass from armed critique to a critique of arms.

In my opinion, the responsibility claim is what gives meaning to an action, leads it to your desired objectives, and explains to whoever is interested in breaking the vicious circle of oppression and passing on the offensive the motives and reasons that made you do it.

Simply and clearly. In a world of generalized information overload and terrorism of virtual bombardments, no action can speak for itself unless the subjects-actors speak out about it.

The high level of distinctiveness that I mentioned above is related to both invariable insurgent names and acronyms; for me invariable names in insurgent actions are of particular importance because, in this way, your actions are linked to each other, stepping up their momentum at the same time.

Furthermore, your discourse takes on greater importance, as it is connected to the consistency of your action. You have the possibility to devise strategies of insurgent action making your overall rationale understood, creating a point of reference and issuing a challenge to action, thus exacerbating the revolutionary threat, breaking up the State's monopoly on violence, as anarchists claim their share of violence to turn it against the enemy.

Turning now to the use of acronyms, it's similarly useful on a more comprehensive level; their main importance is their contribution to recognizing resistance that is manifested without a centre, but instead horizontally and chaotically at the same time, depending on the choices of rebels.

I think that the existence of acronyms is also important as a propaganda tool. Translation networks can do the work of a messenger between insurgent groups regardless of whether or not the latter use an acronym. Nevertheless, the existence of one or more informal networks that use acronyms and recognize one another enhances the momentum of actions placing them within an overall context, rather than something fragmentary, and creates a solid (as to its existence, that is, continuous action) structure which is anarchist and insurrectionary at its root.

Instead of an epilogue

It is clear already that in the name of "citizen security" artificial social threats are constructed in a way to provide political alibi for committing the greatest state crimes, establishing more and more practices of control and surveillance, and toughening anti-terrorism laws. All this is aimed at enabling the privileged citizens of developed countries, who have been awarded this prestigious label, to feel safe while their statist protectors massively and indiscriminately sow death around them.

This is why I envision a belligerent condition in the urban centres where every day the rebels will organize plans for attacks, creating an asymmetric threat that will tear social cohesion and political stability to bits and sow insecurity in the reproduction centres of capitalism. The smooth flow of goods will no longer be taken for granted, and the representatives of oppression will live in fear.

We have nothing to wait for, so we organize ourselves and strike the society of capitalism; revolutionary actions shape the objective conditions, let's multiply them.

Strength to all captive and fugitive comrades
Strength to the 4 anarchist hunger strikers in Mexico*

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* Transcription note: At the time of writing Fernando Bárcenas, Abraham Cortés Ávila, Carlos López Marín and Mario González, incarcerated in different Mexican prisons, were still on hunger strike. On October 17th, 2014, the comrades called off their strike. On October 31st, Mario was released from prison. Freedom for all!

An attempt to an international debate about anonymity, informal organisation and attack has been going on since some time now. Contrary to the Greek contribution above that was send to us, other contributions tried to deepen the critique of the continuous use of acronyms, of the idea that actions and attacks have to be claimed in order to "exist" and link action and idea together. These texts are also proposing ways to consider the insurrectional perspective as not limited to an acronym claiming actions, proposing an insurrectional projectuality to intervene in the struggles, conflicts or simply certain contexts. These contributions can be found in different translations on the Internet or in other anarchist publications, like the "Appendix to an aborted debate on anonymity and attack" (March 2014) or the editorial of the 3th issue of the Mexican publication "Negacion" (June 2014).

Other contributions to this debate expressed the necessity for the anarchist fighting minority to claims its actions, like the recent text in the first issue of the Chilean publication "Contra toda autoridad": "Sobre el anonimato en las acciones. Cuando las cosas no se explican por sí solas"(September 2014).

It seems to us that the core of the debate is about how to consider the insurrectional perspective and the informal organization. The choice of claiming actions, systematically, occasionaly or never at all, is generally the logical result of the revolutionary perspective comrades have. The correspondance project of Avalanche hopes to be a contribution to creating a international informal space where exchange and debate on anarchist projectuality and intervention is stimulated.

4 - Germany - *No illusion, no center of justice, no compromise*

8 - France - *Hit where it hurts*

9 - Spain - *Against alliances, against centrality*

11 - Chile - *We are attack, we are fire against the state*

13 - Chile - *For a practical critique*

15 - Chile - *Action and solidarity are urgent. All the rest are excuses.*

18 - USA - *Cars, guns, autonomy*

24 - Syria - *The struggle for Kobane: an example of selective solidarity*

27 - Spain - *Notes on an ongoing debate on anonymity*

30 - Greece - *About the ongoing debate in Greece on the matter of informal organisation*

33 - Greece - *Liberating Journeys of Attack*